

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a listing of all the claims as they currently stand. Kindly cancel claims 1-32 and add claims 33-39 as follows:

33. (New) A method of aligning opposed images of a stereo imaging system, the method comprising:

capturing a right and a left optical image of a target site;

transforming the right and the left optical images into digital information in form of digital arrays associated with each of the right and the left optical images, the arrays being representable as an arrangement of rows and columns;

defining a threshold value relative to the digital information for the at least one row of at least one array;

comparing the threshold value with the values of the digital information for the at least one row, so as to determine a column position of at least one point related to a target feature.

34. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein comparing the threshold value includes:

determining a first column location along the row corresponding to the first digital value which exceeds the threshold value;

determining a second column location along the row corresponding to the last digital value which exceeded the threshold value; and

determining the mean column location between the first and second column locations, so as to determine a row position of at least one target point.

35. (New) The method of claim 33, further comprising:
repeating the defining and comparing for a plurality of rows to determine a plurality of target row position points; and
analyzing the plurality of row position points to define a first target feature.

36. (New) The method of claim 35, wherein the target feature is generally a straight line, and the step of analyzing the plurality of position points to define a first target feature includes computing a least squares fit to the plurality of position points.

37. (New) The method of claim 35, further comprising:
subsequently further repeating the defining and comparing by substituting a plurality of columns for the plurality of rows so as to determine a plurality of column position points; and
analyzing the plurality of column position points to define a second target feature.

38. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein the target feature is generally elliptical and the step of comparing the threshold value with the values of the digital information includes determining two opposed intersection points of the row with the generally elliptical feature.

39. (New) The method of claim 33, wherein defining a threshold value relative to the digital information for the at least one row includes determining the highest numerical value in the row and multiplying highest value by a predetermined constant.